

DATELINE NO. 94 WASHINGTON  
DEBI WEINSTEIN

JUNE 30, 1976

SPANISH TREASURES FROM THE DEEP  
(INSERTS IN TAPE LIBRARY)

ANNCR: DATELINE: WASHINGTON, PICTURES IN SOUND, WORDS AND MUSIC  
OF PEOPLE, PLACES AND EVENTS IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL.  
TODAY, THIS REPORT FROM VOA'S DEBI WEINSTEIN ON A NEW  
AND UNUSUAL EXHIBIT THAT DOES NOT MARK THE AMERICAN  
BICENTENNIAL.

NARR: THE SHOW CHRONICLES THE SPANISH CONQUEST OF THE NEW  
WORLD. AND IT FEATURES A RARE COLLECTION OF GOLD AND  
SILVER LOST FOR THREE AND A HALF CENTURIES ON THE OCEAN  
FLOOR. THIS TREASURE IS FROM THE GALLEON "NUESTRA SENORA  
DE ATOCHA," ONE OF THE EIGHT SPANISH SHIPS THAT SANK  
DURING A HURRICANE OFF THE FLORIDA COAST IN 1622 WHILE  
CARRYING WEALTH FROM AMERICA TO SPAIN. A CREW OF FIFTY MEN  
SEARCHED FIVE YEARS BEFORE DISCOVERING THE WRECK.

TAPE: CUT ONE -- FISHER

"IT SEEMS THE KING HAD GIVEN ORDERS FOR NOBODY TO WRITE  
DOWN THE LOCATION OF WHERE THIS TREASURE WAS BECAUSE HE  
DIDN'T WANT ANY CHANCE THAT THE DUTCH PIRATES OR THE  
OTHER PIRATES WOULD INTERCEDE AND FIND THE TREASURE."

NARR: THAT'S MELVIN FISHER, LEADER OF THE EXPEDITION THAT FINALLY  
DISCOVERED THE TREASURE. THE EXPEDITION LEARNED THROUGH  
MANUSCRIPTS KEPT IN THE ARCHIVES AT SEVILLE, SPAIN THAT  
THE HURRICANE WHICH SANK THE SHIP 354 YEARS AGO WAS FOLLOWED  
WITHIN WEEKS BY A SECOND STORM THAT RIPPED THE LOST GALLEON  
APART AND SCATTERED ITS CONTENTS. OVER THE CENTURIES  
SUCCESSIVE LAYERS OF SILT AND SAND BURIED THE VESSEL'S

NARR: REMAINS. BUT, AS MR. FISHER EXPLAINS, ONE DAY WHILE  
(CONT) SEARCHING THE OCEAN FLOOR...

TAPE: CUT TWO -- FISHER

"WE FINALLY FOUND IT. ONE LEAD BALL,. I FOUND IT MYSELF. ONE LEAD BALL AND ONE PIECE OF POTTERY, BROKEN POTTERY. AND WE DUG ANOTHER FIVE MINUTES AND I FOUND SIX LEAD BALLS, A COUPLE MORE PIECES OF POTTERY AND A BARREL HOOP. AND I CAME UP AND I TOLD THE GUYS "THIS IS IT. THIS POTTERY IS THE RIGHT VINTAGE AND I THINK WE FOUND THE ATOCHA."

NARR: THAT WAS IN JUNE OF 1971. THEIR FINDS, TO DATE, INCLUDE THREE GOLD BARS, 63-AND-HALF ONE-POUND (HALF-KILO) BARS OF SILVER, MORE THAN SIX THOUSAND COINS, THIRTY GOLD MONEY CHAINS, A FOUR AND A HALF POUND (2 KILO) GOLD DISK AND GOLD CUP. MISTER FISHER PLACES THE VALUES OF THE RECOVERED TREASURE AT EIGHT MILLION DOLLARS -- AND HE SAYS THERE IS ANOTHER FOUR HUNDRED MILLION DOLLARS WORTH OF ITEMS STILL IN THE SEA.

MISTER FISHER'S FAVORITE ITEM IS THE ADMIRAL'S WHISTLE. HE SAYS WHEN HE BLOWS THE WHISTLE, IT TURNS OFF ALL THE TELEPHONES AS FAR AS 30 METERS AWAY.

ALSO INCLUDED IN THE EXHIBIT IN WASHINGTON ARE NAVIGATOR'S DIVIDERS, CORAL-ENCRUSTED SWORD HILTS, DAGGERS, MUSKETS AND OTHER ARTIFACTS. A BRONZE CANNON FROM THE ATOCHA WAS PRESENTED TO QUEEN SOFIA OF SPAIN DURING HER RECENT VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES. THE EXPEDITION ALSO FOUND SOMETHING NOT LISTED IN THE RECORDS OF THE SHIP -- CONTRABAND GOLD...

TAPE: CUT THREE -- FISHER

"WE'VE BEEN FINDING QUITE A BIT OF CONTRABAND THAT WAS SMUGGLED. WAY BACK IN THOSE DAYS THEY DID IT TOO. THIS ONE GOLD BAR I JUST SHOWED YOU IS NUMBER SIX HUNDRED AND FIFTY ONE AND IT WAS NOT REGISTERED ON THE MANIFEST. WE FOUND A COUPLE OF OTHERS WITH NUMBERS LIKE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY NINE AND SO ON. AND SO IT LOOKS LIKE WE'RE GOING TO FIND AT LEAST SIX HUNDRED AND FIFTY MORE OF THOSE."

NARR: MISTER FISHER'S SAYS HE HOPES TO CONTINUE HIS UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGY. HE HOPES TO SEARCH FOR THE LOST CITY OF ATLANTIS AND TO LOCATE AND SALVAGE A "MANILA GALLEON" WHICH SAILED UNDER THE SPANISH FLAG FROM MANILA TO ACAPULCO CENTURIES AGO. HOW DID MISTER FISHER BECOME INTERESTED IN UNDERWATER ARCHEOLOGY?

TAPE: CUT FOUR -- FISHER

"WELL IT JUST KIND OF GREW ON ME SLOWLY. I'M NOT SURE I KNOW. WAY BACK IN HIGH SCHOOL I USED TO HAVE A COUPLE OF STUDY PERIODS AND INSTEAD OF STUDYING, I FOUND MYSELF READING STEVENSON'S 'TREASURE ISLAND' OR ABOUT BLACK-BEARD THE PIRATE OR CAPTAIN KIDD AND SO ON. AND I'VE ALWAYS BEEN FASCINATED BY TREASURE OR TREASURE HUNTING. AND ITS BEEN MY HOBBY FOR MANY, MANY YEARS AND NOW ITS A FULL TIME BUSINESS."

ANNCR: SPANISH TREASURE FROM THE DEEP ... ON DISPLAY IN WASHINGTON, D.C. YOU'VE BEEN LISTENING TO DATELINE: WASHINGTON. JOIN US AGAIN NEXT -----FOR ANOTHER PROGRAM IN THIS SERIES.

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